Outside Lands

San Francisco History from Western Neighborhoods Project

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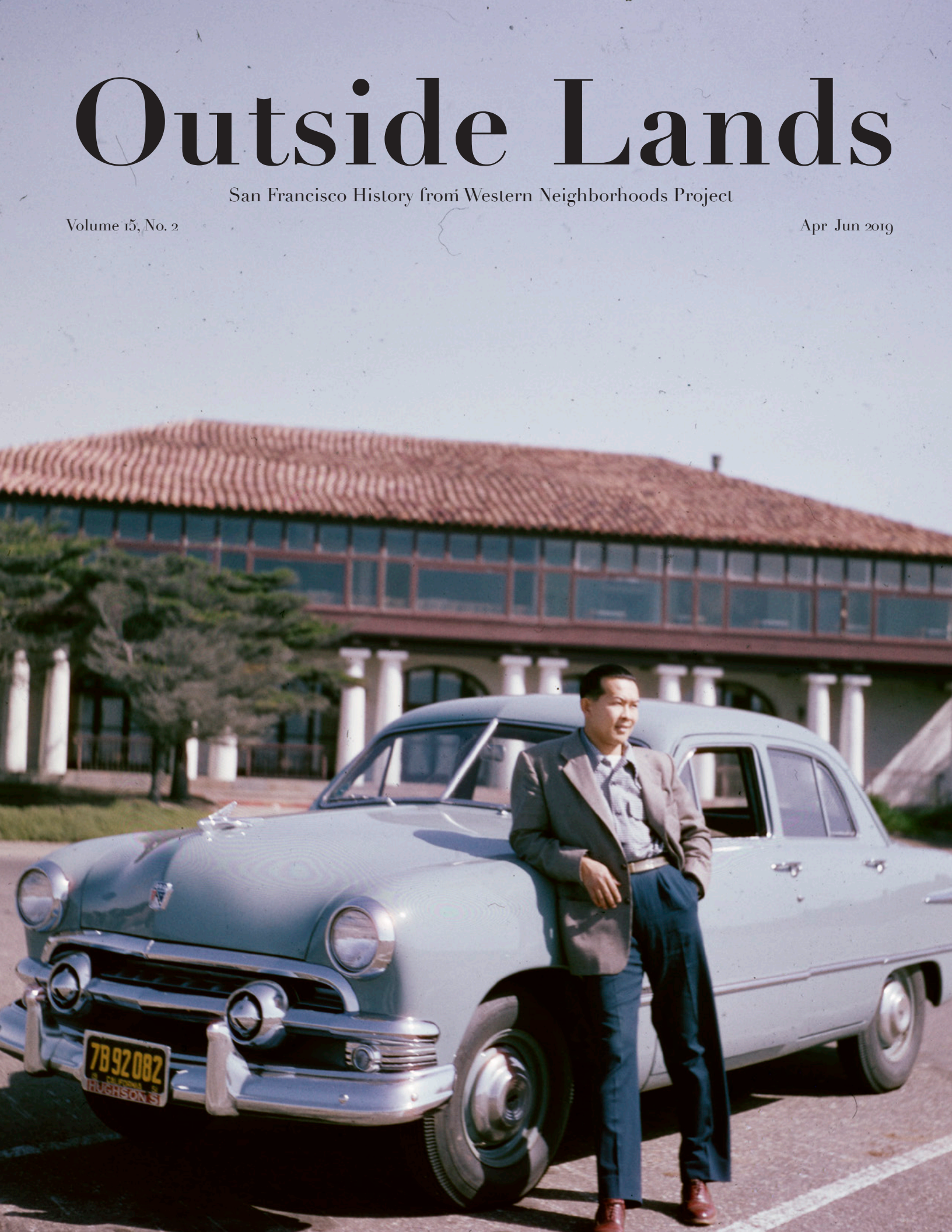

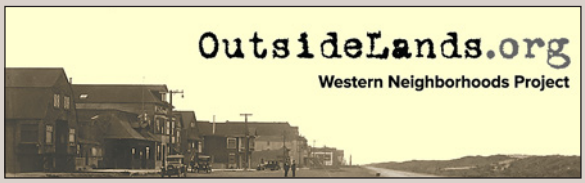

Outside Lands

History from Western Neighborhoods Project
(Previously issued as SF West History)

April-June 2019: Volume 15, Number 2

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Cover: Man, car, and the Beach Chalet in 1957. (Lee family collection, wnp12.0111)

Right: Visitors learning history at San Francisco History Days at the Old Mint on March 2, 2019.

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Our 20th anniversary gala celebration on May 19, 2019, is drawing near: seats are being claimed, the menu is being finalized, wine is being chosen. We're very excited to have **Peter Hartlaub** of the *San Francisco Chronicle* joining us as our guest of honor for the evening. Peter loves local history and all the quirky details that make San Francisco. He particularly likes to delve into the *Chronicle's* photo archive and clipping morgue and I bet he'll have some good stories to share with us that night.

Make sure you grab a ticket before the event sells out. The night of wining, dining, and celebrating neighborhood history will take place at The Clubhouse at the Presidio Golf Course. It's just a few hundred yards from the Arguello gate and has plenty of parking. Go to **outsidelands.org/gala** for more information and to reserve your seat.

Washington Murals Controversy

After four meetings, a "Reflection and Action Group" appointed by the San Francisco Unified School District voted to recommend removing the Victor Arnautoff murals inside George Washington High School because the artwork "glorifies slavery, genocide, colonization, manifest destiny, white supremacy, oppression…"

Of particular offense to some Washington parents are two mural sections that have been lightning rods of controversy before: the depiction of a dead Native American in the path of westward-headed white settlers, and a group of enslaved African-Americans at Washington's plantation. Decades ago, when these exact sections were protested at the campus, new murals were created as a compromise.

The irony is Arnautoff, a social realist painter with a belief that art could remake society for the better, painted the Washington murals to highlight the injustices of our nation's history through the first president's life. He wasn't glorifying manifest destiny, genocide, or slavery, but rather was subversively presenting the shameful facts that the American history books weren't facing in the 1930s. But it feels a hopeless task to argue an artist's intent when viewers are offended and immune to subtlety. One can't rationalize away another's pain or anger, especially as social and racial injustices fill our news feeds.

It is my opinion, however, that painting over the murals, destroying art, would be a crime. I believe as a tool the murals are a rare and valuable resource to Washington students. In the art are all the paradoxes and disconnects of our American values and ideology in relation to our actions, relevant and fought over each and every day.

If we cannot trust our students to view the murals in context with Arnautoff's vision, surely a solution to hide the sensitive panels from general public view can be found. Teachers, students, artists, and art historians, prepared with knowledge of the social realism style and familiar with the critique of history that Arnautoff intended, would be able to schedule access to the controversial sections. Just as the school district issues warnings to students and parents who feel they may not be able to face sensitive subjects because of past traumas, so can students be given the option to avoid encountering the controversial sections.

Outright destruction of art, is censorious, suppressive, and illiberal. It sets a terrible precedent and is very un-San Franciscan.



The Board of Education may decide on the Reflection and Action Group's recommendation as early as mid-April. If you would like to offer a constructive opinion on the murals, the email addresses of Board of Education members can be found at http://www.sfusd.edu/en/about-sfusd/board-of-education/overview-and-members.html

Celebrating the Richmond District

Thanks to a grant from the City of San Francisco, and support from Supervisor of District 1, Sandra Lee Fewer, we will be offering an increased number of events and walks focused on the Richmond District in the second half of 2019. We are also beginning our long-awaited project, "Chinese in the Richmond" in partnership with the Chinese Historical Society of America. More on this later, but we look forward to conducting interviews and doing deep historical research into Chinese-American life in the northwest corner of the city.



George Washington points to the west while grayed-out settlers march past a dead Native American in one of Victor Arnautoff's controversial murals.

Where in West S.F.?

"Wonderful as always. You guys got me in my car today. It's not often I have to get out and search for a 'Stump the Stars Where in San Francisco.'" — Charlie Figone.

Our mystery row of fine houses last issue was found by a number of WNP members and one very cute dog.

These homes, designed by architect Harold Stoner, stand on Beachmont Drive at Lagunitas Drive in the Lakeside District between 19th Avenue and Junipero Serra Boulevard south of Sloat Boulevard. This image was part of a larger collection of Lakeside prints that used to be on display in a real estate office on Ocean Avenue, and donated to us a number of years ago by Laurie Berman. We believe the photographer was E. F. Joseph.

Margaret Ostermann: "I often walk past these when I take my dog (Charlie) to West Portal. So here's Charlie in the contemporary shot proudly sporting his 'WNP LOVES YOU' button. As a Canadian I always giggle to myself that the American Dream of a white picket fenced home really is true. Thanks for the Where in West S.F. a foreign millennial could pick out!"



Charlie loves WNP.

Margie Whitnah: "Another easy one to identify for me, with those white picket fences and old street light "turning on" some distant memories. (Most of those fences in Lakeside District still have the picket finials, but not the one at 85 Beachmont Drive—probably a replaced fence like the original street light that's no longer there.)



Beachmont Drive at Lagunitas, circa 1939

"I had a college girlfriend, Cheryl Proefrock, that lived at 80 Lagunitas Avenue, so that photo could almost have been taken from her front yard.

"Both my mother and I attended Commodore Sloat School, but I think Lakeside Village was fairly new in my early 1950s memories. So, I have no idea what my mother's family, living a couple blocks away east on Ocean Avenue, saw there in the 1920s, but, as a young child in the early 1950s, I went with my mother shopping at the Manor Market grocery store (now Walgreens). I believe she had her groceries delivered to the house, as she did from the El Rey Market. (My mother never drove, but later a neighbor and, of course, my father, drove when the vegetable, milk, and bread trucks no longer came around to our neighborhood.)

"We frequented Lakeside Village's Bowerman's Drug Store and my pediatrician had an office upstairs in that unique triangular building. Seems there was some sort of 'Five and Dime' store, too. As a teen, there was a period of time, when I went to Shaw's Ice Cream store almost daily for a 15-cent Thin Mint ice cream cone while walking home from Lowell [High School]. The amazing bakery (Ambrosia?) has lots of special memories, as do special occasions, even into recent years, dining at the Villa d'Este (formerly Town) Restaurant with it's unique architecture.

"It's so nice to know that the Lakeside Village and Lakeside District hasn't changed all that much over the decades! It's so sad that more areas of SF and elsewhere haven't had the foresight (or ability) to plan on installing wires underground as this Lakeside neighborhood pictured in your "Where is West SF" did!"

Angelo Figone: "Where else would you find the beautiful detached homes (at least 5 styles) with the white picket fence AND the stylish street lighting? Alas, gone now thanks to too tall replacements."

The undergrounding of wires was part of the plan created by the Stoneson Brothers, Ellis and Henry, who acted as developers of Lakeside. The Stonesons began Lakeside in 1936 and the Lakeside Village shopping district along Ocean Avenue that Margie Whitnah recalled mostly followed in the 1940s. After an interruption in building activity during World War II (the Stonesons worked on war housing over in Silver Terrace during the conflict), Lakeside was finished in the early 1950s with

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The Doré Vase

by John Martini

WNP member John Martini is a retired National Park Service ranger helping us process our OpenSFHistory collection.. To see thousands more historical images, visit opensfhistory.org.

One of the most enjoyable parts of doing research is going head-first down a rabbit hole of history. This recently happened to me when I was tasked by Woody LaBounty to write an article about surviving elements of the 1894 Midwinter Fair held in Golden Gate Park. My initial suggestion was to inventory all the bits and pieces still scattered around the music concourse, like the Japanese Tea Garden, the Cider Press fountain, and the Gladiator statue.

"Focus," advised Woody. "Take just one feature and tell its story in detail." So, I decided to research only one remnant, and it would be a goody—the towering bronze sculpture called "Poem of the Vine," created by artist/sculptor Gustave Doré, and now located just south of the de Young Museum. Known familiarly as "The Doré Vase," it's been a feature in the park since the 1894 fair.

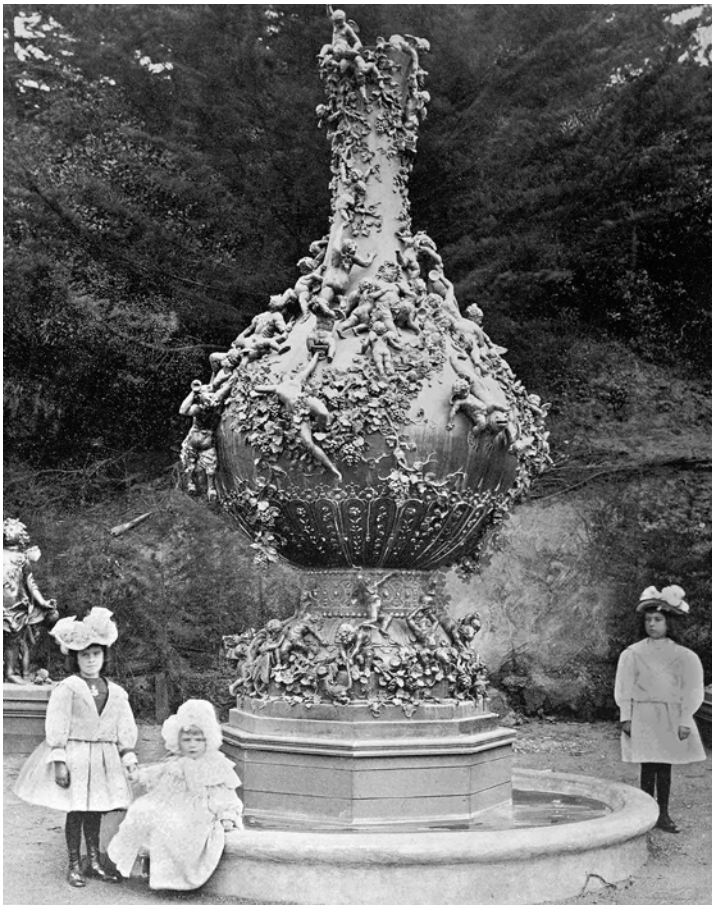
As I started to research the vase, I immediately realized its history was much more complicated than merely being a sculptural remnant from the California Midwinter International Exposition. The vase, it turns out, was the final grand effort on one of the nineteenth century's most prolific artists, the illustrator and sculptor Gustave Doré. Its creation in the 1870s nearly bankrupted him and probably contributed to his early death.

I'm a linear kind of guy, so let me put the vase's story in chronological order.

In the mid-1870s, in anticipation of the upcoming 1878 *Exposition Universelle* in Paris, Gustave Doré began work on a massive sculptural "poem in bronze" celebrating France's viticulture and illustrating the struggle to create fine wine. The sculpture, officially named *Poème de la Vigne* (*Poem of the Vine*), would illustrate the progress from grape to wine as a giant decanter encrusted with a tableau of figures from classic mythology: Bacchus, Venus, nymphs and cherubs, all intertwined in a tangle of grapevines. And it would be big. When cast in bronze, the eleven-foot tall statue would be seven feet in diameter and weigh nearly three tons.

Doré hoped to make the vase a centerpiece for an exhibit on French wines, but the process of sculpting the dozens of pieces covering it was so complex that by the time the exposition opened, he had only created a full-size plaster model. Not wanting to miss out on the fair, Doré put the plaster vase on display anyway, staining it dark green to simulate bronze. The immense vase was visually stunning, but Doré was denied any awards or honors because, according to the rules, it wasn't a completed work of art.

In 1882, Doré finally got *Poem of the Vine* cast in bronze by the Thiébaut Brothers foundry in Paris. The cost was a mind-boggling 60,000 francs, about $310,000 in today's dollars. Doré had no way to pay for it, anticipating that he'd pay back the foundry once the vase sold. But it didn't sell.



Doré's vase on exhibit at the 1894 Midwinter Fair. (Isaiah West Taber photograph; *Official History of the Exposition.*)

Instead, Doré died in 1883, leaving the foundry stuck with the behemoth vase. For nearly ten years it stayed in storage with the Thiébaut Brothers, who finally saw an opportunity to recoup their loss by exhibiting it at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago. There, visitors had to pay to view the giant curiosity. It's not clear, after shipping costs, if this scheme made any money for the Thiébaut Brothers. But the vase was spotted by Michael de Young and included in his plan to relocate attractions from the Chicago fair to San Francisco for a California Midwinter International Exposition.

De Young had the bronze vase, still the property of the Thiébaut Brothers, shipped to San Francisco and placed on display from January to July 1894 as part of the Midwinter Fair. Its display location, though, was a poor one. The sculpture was exhibited in a secluded grove of eucalyptus trees alongside the photo gallery of Isaiah West Taber, just

west of today's Academy of Sciences. The earliest photo of Doré's vase was taken there in 1894 by Taber, and shows three little girls dwarfed by the imposing bronze.

According to the official history of the Midwinter Exposition, the *Poem of the Vine* turned out to be less than a stellar attraction due both to its relatively obscure location and the fact that, once again, visitors had to pay an admission fee to see it.

After the exposition closed, the Egyptian-themed Fine Arts Building was retained as a permanent museum for the city of San Francisco. Once again, Michael de Young was the driving force behind the plan and helped acquire many objects for display, including sculptures from the fair. In 1895, the museum's new board of directors voted to name it the "Memorial Museum," since it would be a memorial to the great exposition that had just closed.

De Young wanted Doré's vase as a centerpiece for the new museum, and he offered the Thiébaut Brothers a cutthroat price of 50,000 francs (about $300,000 today). The brothers balked. Then, according to legend, de Young spread out 50,000 francs in cash on the negotiating table and announced, "take it or leave it."

Faced with the costs of shipping the vase back to Paris, the brothers instead sold it at a loss to de Young. He shortly donated it to the Memorial Museum.

The museum staff originally planned to transform the vase into a fountain and placing it centrally in today's Music Concourse, but the idea never went anywhere. From 1895 until 1919, *Poem of the Vine* stood in front of the Fine Arts/ Memorial Museum building flanked by an ever-changing array of statuary, antique cannon, and battlefield trophies acquired by the museum. Newspapers reported that the 1906 earthquake caused the urn to tilt on its base, but it was spared major damage.

In 1919, the aging museum was greatly expanded when a new wing was added on its west side. This was the first of three modern buildings that would be added over the next six years, paid for in large part by the energetic Michael de Young. In recognition of his efforts, the Memorial Museum was renamed the "M. H. de Young Memorial Museum" in 1925, even though it really wasn't a memorial to de Young. The 1894 building was by this time totally obsolete and was demolished in 1929, leaving only a pair of concrete sphinxes to mark its original entrance.

When the first new wing opened in 1919, it featured a large Hall of Statuary immediately inside the main entrance. The centerpiece of this statuary display was Doré's *Poem of the Vine,* relocated from outside the old Museum building.

The Doré vase would be moved repeatedly over the next sixty years, its wanderings documented through historic photographs and newspaper articles. Just before the start of World War II, the great bronze was moved back outside the museum and displayed on the lawn in front of the west wing. It apparently reigned there until the late 1960s, when it was moved back indoors and served as a backdrop for gala receptions at the museum.



Doré Vase at the Memorial Museum entrance with original sphinx statue from 1894 fair at left, 1900s. (Marilyn Blaisdell Collection, Courtesy of Molly Blaisdell, wnp70.0247)

The Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989 caused immense damage to the de Young Museum complex, but luckily the Doré vase was unscathed. Engineers declared the museum could not be repaired and brought up to modern museum and safety codes. Total replacement was the only option.

The shored-up de Young stayed open for another decade while its fate was debated. In January 2001, it closed for a five-year program of demolition and reconstruction. During this period Doré's vase was put into storage for a while, then displayed inside the Legion of Honor at Lincoln Park.

When the "new" M. H. de Young Memorial Museum opened in October 2005, the *Poem of the Vine* was returned to the museum grounds. This time, though, it had a dramatic new setting. Rather

than being plopped ignominiously on the lawn, the vase was placed atop a concrete pedestal near the sphinxes that had flanked the entrance to the Egyptian-styled 1894 building. Immediately behind the vase was another beloved feature from the old de Young: the Pool of Enchantment.

In a nod to the vase's history, the designers placed it almost precisely where it had stood when it welcomed visitors to the original Memorial Museum from 1895 to 1919.

The vase was destined to make one more trip. In 2004, the National Gallery of Canada borrowed *Poem of the Vine* for a major retrospective of Gustave Doré's works. The vase was carefully removed from its pedestal and shipped to Ottawa where it was prominently featured in the Doré exhibit, which ran from June 12 to September 14, 2014, before being returned to San Francisco.

You can watch a video of the Poem of the Vine being prepared for exhibit in Ottawa at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Cx9S1dD2rg



Poem of the Vine, by Gustave Doré, in front of the de Young Museum, 2019. (John Martini photograph)

A Personal Reminiscence

When I was very small, my mom would take me to the de Young Museum almost weekly.

On each visit I'd make her stop at the Doré vase. I stared, transfixed by the tableaux of pudgy cherubs fighting an army of giant bugs and lizards, while above them squirming goat-hoofed satyrs and Grecian nymphs stretched out their arms toward the just-out-of-reach mouth of the vase.

I asked mom what the vase was for. Instead of launching into a lecture about Gustave Doré and the long-vanished 1894 Midwinter Fair (which I'm sure she knew by heart), she told me instead the story of "The Crow and The Pitcher." It went like this:

"In a spell of dry weather, when the Birds could find very little to drink, a thirsty Crow found a pitcher with a little water in it. But the pitcher was high and had a narrow neck, and no matter how he tried, the Crow could not reach the water. The poor thing felt as if he must die of thirst.



"Then an idea came to him. Picking up some small pebbles, he dropped them into the pitcher one by one. With each pebble the water rose a little higher until at last it was near enough so he could drink."

Mom explained to me the giant bronze vase was the very same pitcher that the crow had dropped pebbles into in order to get a drink. That's what it was for.

It made total sense. Because I was five.

The Conservatory of Flowers: Mysteries Explored

by Nicole Meldahl



Conservatory of Flowers in Golden Gate Park, circa 1890. (A. J. McDonald photograph; WNP collection, wnp27.3683.)

Spring is in the air, or at least San Francisco's version of it. What better way to celebrate the change of seasons than at a treasured landmark, the Conservatory of Flowers? Tourists and residents alike have been coming here for generations, but much of its history has been shrouded in mystery due to misinformation fueled by second-hand accounts and a lack of primary resources.

Since Western Neighborhoods Project (WNP) has partnered with the Conservatory to celebrate its 140th anniversary this year, WNP Board President Chelsea Sellin and I teamed up to solve these outstanding mysteries. We discovered some enduring myths along the way, and what follows is an abbreviated account of our research journey

Myth: James Lick Donated the Conservatory to the Park
While it came from James Lick's estate, he didn't donate it to San Francisco.

The Conservatory of Flowers was part of Golden Gate Park's original plan. William Hammond Hall, the park's surveyor and first superintendent, envisioned a conservatory in the northwest corner of the park on a site marked as Plateau Mound. While Hall was surveying and planning Golden Gate Park, a local capitalist and philanthropist named James Lick was making plans of his own.

A native of Pennsylvania, Lick arrived in San Francisco in January of 1848. He bought real estate in San Francisco and San Jose, acquired South Bay orchards, and invested in a variety of businesses to become one of the richest men in California. After surviving a stroke in the early 1870s, Lick focused on putting his affairs in order. In 1873-1874, he set up a formal trust to distribute his immense fortune through specific bequests. When the Lick Trust announced plans to allocate $60,000 for a monument to Francis Scott Key in the park, William Hammond Hall's Plateau Mound was renamed "Mount Lick," and many saw the renaming as a sign of Lick's intention to donate a conservatory to Golden Gate Park.

When James Lick died on October 1, 1876, his trust went into a protracted legal battle. Specific bequests were dispersed after the lawsuits were settled, and what remained was divided between residuary legatees, the California Academy of Sciences and the Society of California Pioneers.

As part of its residual share, the Society of California Pioneers received the materials for two conservatories stored in unopened, massive crates on James Lick's estate in San Jose.

A group of twenty-seven San Franciscans with influential names like Crocker, Spreckels, and Stanford (known to history as "The 27") stepped in to purchase the materials for $2,600 with the intention of realizing William Hammond Hall's original plan for a conservatory in Golden Gate Park.

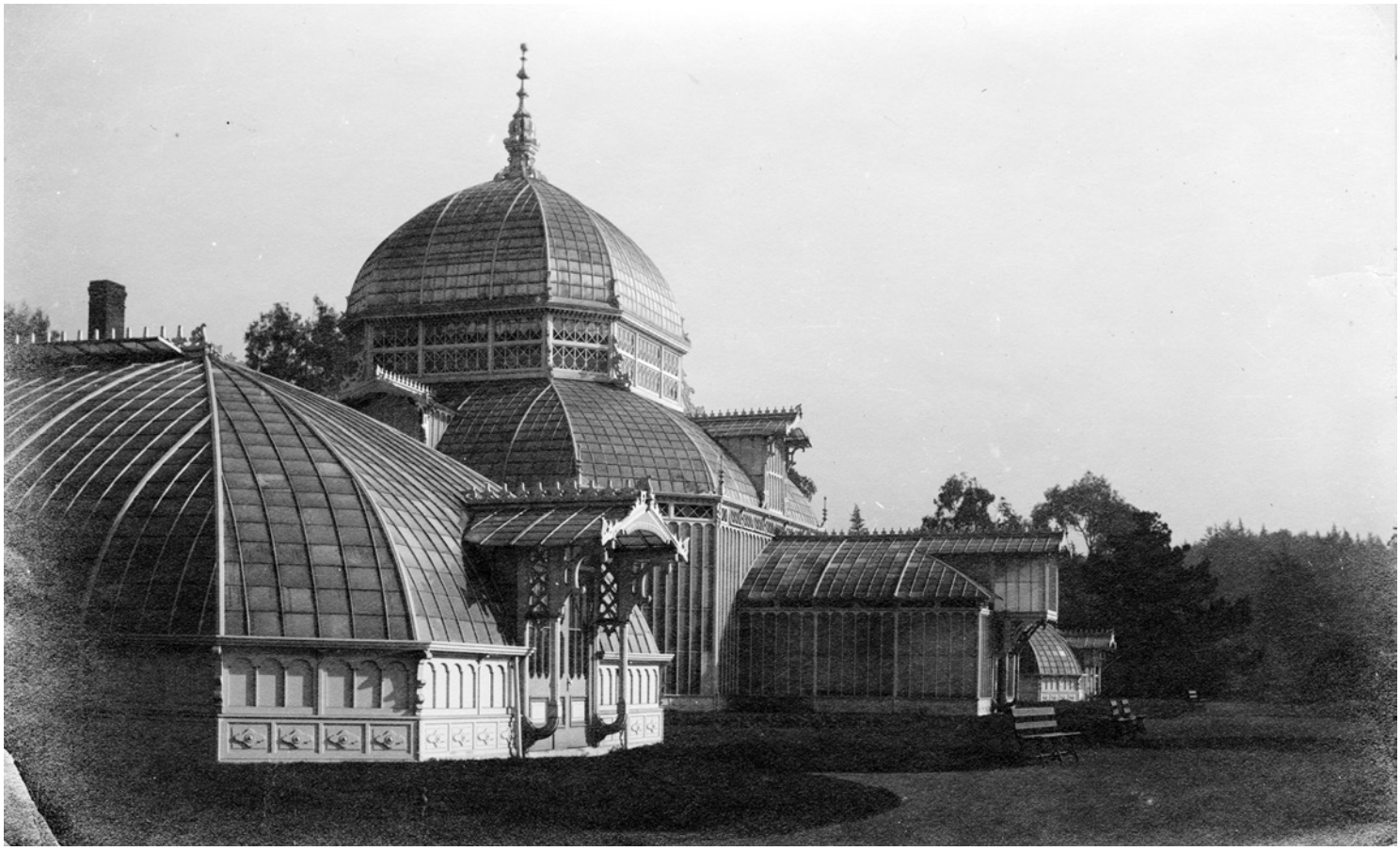
On December 29, 1877, the conservatories were formally offered to Golden Gate Park as a gift. The donation letter briefly described how Lick, "in his lifetime, at heavy cost, imported and prepared the materials now stored at his homestead in San Jose, where they were designed to be erected, two large and beautiful conservatories, modeled after those in the Kew Gardens, London."[1] Which brings us to another myth…

Myth: The Conservatory was imported from Europe
Much of the Conservatory likely came from New York.

One of the most enduring stories told about the Conservatory of Flowers is that it was patterned after structures at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew, London, and manufactured by Richard Turner at his Hammersmith Iron Works in Dublin, then imported to San Francisco.

The origin of the Palm House at Kew suffers from its own confusing provenance. Frequently misattributed to Richard Turner, Palm House was designed by Decimus Burton, who was also a consulting architect at the Duke of Devonshire's Chatsworth House, home to a large "glasshouse" (as greenhouses were called at the time) conceived by the Duke's head gardener, Joseph Paxton. Known as "The Great Stove," this glasshouse included a ridge-and-furrow roof, a design that was originally devised by J. C. Loudon in the eighteenth century. Loudon wrote a book titled *Sketches of Curvilinear Hothouses* (1818) on the pioneering use of iron and glass as building materials that heavily influenced Burton, Turner, and Paxton.

The ridge-and-furrow roof shed water easily while allowing in a maximum amount of light as its angled glass filtered the midday intensity of the sun. Paxton included this roof in his design for the Crystal Palace at The Great Exhibition of 1851, and it was also employed at Kew, where it allowed the famed *Victoria regia* (now known as the *Victoria amazonica*) to bloom indoors for the first time. A seed from this indoor pioneer was donated to the Conservatory of Flowers by the British Consul in 1879, and consistently bloomed until it was destroyed by fire in 1883.



Side view of the Conservatory of Flowers, circa 1900, showing its intricate construction. (WNP collection, wnp27.2492).

Richard Turner and his Hammersmith Iron Works are credited with the framework in Palm House, among other aspects. Turner was responsible for its curvilinear construction, the use of wrought iron instead of cast iron for the main ribs, decorative flower motifs on iron column heads, and balustrade staircases—touches which many say can be seen at the Conservatory of Flowers. In addition, Turner's use of standardized, prefabricated materials manufactured in Dublin and assembled at Kew gave credence to theories that Lick's crated conservatories came from abroad.

However, our Conservatory owes its design equally to Joseph Paxton, Decimus Burton, and especially to the influence of J. C. Loudon. No singular structure serves as the Conservatory's inspiration. More importantly, none of these men were known to produce copies of either their own or their contemporaries' work for sale abroad. Joseph Paxton did create a line of "portable and economical hothouses" that were manufactured and sold by Samuel Hereman in England, but there is no record they were sold to the United States; even if they were, the designs were very basic.

The use of the word "imported" in many accounts of the Conservatory's origins can be misleading. At the time, importation applied to all goods acquired from outside of California, which means reference to the imported conservatories could point to origins in New York State with the firm of Lord and Burnham.

Lord and Burnham capitalized on the popularity of commercial and private greenhouses after the Civil War and were awarded some of the most prestigious contracts in their time. There were two local examples of their work that bear a striking resemblance to the Conservatory of Flowers. The first was a large conservatory on the Millbrae estate of Darius Ogden (D. O.) Mills, founder of the Bank of California and one of James Lick's trustees. The second is a large conservatory built for the U. C. Botanical Garden in Berkeley in 1894, a project that was spearheaded by agriculture professor Eugene Hilgard in the 1880s. Hilgard traveled to Europe in 1893 to inspect prominent conservatories, and Lord and Burnham were ultimately commissioned to model U. C. Berkeley's after Joseph Paxton's Crystal Palace (1851).

The use of the word "imported" in many accounts of the Conservatory's origins can be misleading.

Lord and Burnham often modeled their designs on European examples. The firm sold widely throughout the United States, but catalogs from the Conservatory's era read more like portfolios of past projects than of a Sears Roebuck-style inventory. Although materials were prefabricated in New York, projects were tailored to each site and client and were not sold as "kits."



A Lord and Burnham-designed conservatory at the U.C. Botanical Garden in Berkeley, which was demolished in 1924 to make way for a parking lot during campus expansion (WNP collection, wnp26.555).



The Bugbee-as-architect rumor was spread by his nephew, A. S. Bugbee, who would often drive guests by the Conservatory and speak proudly of his uncle. (Marilyn Blaisdell Collection, courtesy of Molly Blaisdell, wnp70.0229.)

Past chroniclers of the Conservatory's history have claimed the entire framework for the greenhouse (glass, wood, and framing) was shipped to California. But the only shipping manifest ever found merely records a boiler, and, since James Lick apparently never unpacked the massive crates, the best description of their contents comes from Park Commission records that refer to "33 TONS OF GLASS." While glass panels used in the Conservatory of Flowers required specialty manufacture in Lord and Burnham's New York factory, wood was cheaper to source nearby than to import—especially in a state blanketed by local redwood. Tests conducted in 1997 revealed that wood used in the Conservatory is a species of local redwood not available on either the East Coast or abroad. The origins of the iron framework still remain unaccounted for.

A devastating fire in 1880 wiped out the Lord and Burnham factory along with almost all of the firm's archive, but it most likely the company was responsible for the Conservatory's design and most of its materials. F. A. Lord even came west to manage the Conservatory's construction.

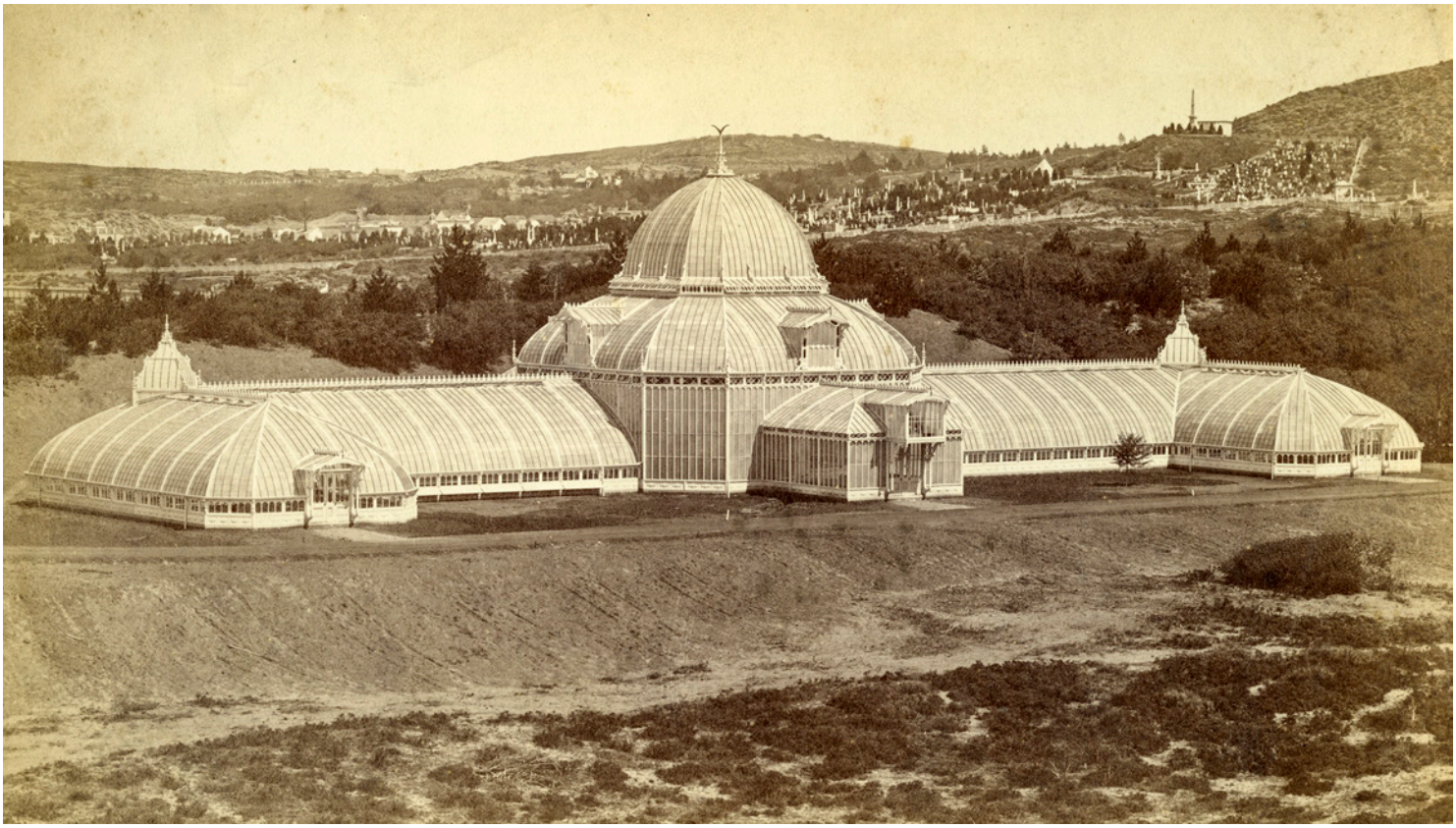
Myth: Architect S. C. Bugbee Built the Conservatory
F. A. Lord and William Hammond Hall oversaw its erection.

On February 14, 1878, San Francisco allotted $40,000 of the general fund to the improvement of Golden Gate Park, including the cost of constructing the "Lick Conservatory." Three months later, the Park Commission rejected architect J. P. Gaynor's unsolicited offer to build the Conservatory. William Hammond Hall was available and acted as consulting engineer, while Lord and Burnham were hired to oversee construction for the fixed sum of $2,050.

Terms for the Conservatory's donation required that it be built within eighteen months and work began in late July 1878, six months after the conservatories were transferred to the park. All of this is accounted for in Park Commission meeting minutes from 1878, yet a man named Samuel C. Bugbee is often credited in articles and histories as the official Conservatory architect.

S. C. Bugbee and Son was a prominent architectural firm in nineteenth-century San Francisco, responsible for major structures such as the San Francisco Almshouse (1867), Wade's Opera House (1875-1876), the Nob Hill houses of Leland Stanford (1874-1876) and Charles C. Crocker (1878-1880), as well as numerous buildings at Mills College (1871-1877).

But Samuel died in September 1877, before the Park Commission accepted Lick's conservatories. His son, Charles, was working as departmental architect for Oakland Schools, but had vacated this position by the summer of 1879, possibly because he was quite ill. He died in January of 1880, making it highly unlikely that he was involved with the Conservatory of Flowers. So how did their name become associated with this project? Collective cultural amnesia and some colorful family lore are to blame.



Conservatory of Flowers as it looked on opening day, with Odd Fellows Cemetery visible on Lone Mountain in background. The dome was rebuilt to a different design after an 1883 fire. (Carleton Watkins photograph; WNP collection, wnp27.3684.)

The only known materials that connect either Samuel or Charles Bugbee to the Conservatory of Flowers originate with A. S. (Arthur Stephenson) Bugbee, the son of Samuel's brother, John. Both of John's sons became architects and Arthur was best known for small-to-medium sized commercial and industrial buildings such as garages. In January 1926, the *San Francisco Chronicle* ran a profile of A. S. Bugbee's new Kleiber sedan; it read: "Yesterday Bugbee took a ride through Golden Gate Park with a party of out-of-town friends to show them the Conservatory, which was designed by Bugbee's grandfather and uncle."[2]

Arthur also wrote a pamphlet in 1957 entitled "Information about Samuel Charles Bugbee," which can be found at the San Francisco Public Library and claims Samuel worked on the Conservatory of Flowers. His evidence seems to be based on a recollection that Samuel once possessed a photograph of the building that he gave to his son, Charles, but it was lost in the 1906 earthquake and fire.

In September 2003, the *San Francisco Chronicle* published an article referencing the forgotten architect of the Conservatory. The author, John King, soon after received an email from Laurence Jackson Hyman, a great-great-great-grandson of S. C. Bugbee, who wrote, "I have in my possession a Sept. 30, 1957 letter from Max G. Funke, General Manager of the San Francisco Recreation and Park Department confirming [S. C. Bugbee as architect of the Conservatory], as well as numerous other documents given to me by my grandparents, Leslie and Geraldine Jackson."[3] A staff member at the Conservatory of Flowers followed up with Hyman, but it's unclear if a meeting happened and, if so, what came of it. We would certainly love to know more, but one Rec and Park employee's note from 1957 does not compensate for the lack of primary sources.

Despite our best efforts, the opening day of the Conservatory of Flowers is a mystery we may never solve.

Budgetary stress from the "Long Depression" created by the Panic of 1873 likely led to personnel reductions while the Conservatory was under construction. In addition, the steamer *Georgia* wrecked off the coast of Central America on September 24, 1878, carrying building supplies and a heating apparatus for the Conservatory; but the work, supervised by William Hammond Hall and F. A. Lord, went on. All Park Department painters and carpenters

were ordered to the Conservatory on February 27, 1879 in the rush to finish.

Construction was completed by April and on May 8, 1879, a *San Francisco Examiner* article mentioned that "although but a few weeks has elapsed since the acceptance of the building by the Commissioners, considerable progress has been made in stocking the interior." No record of a formal dedication or opening may be due to budget restrictions and other delays, resulting in a frugal "soft opening." Despite our best efforts, the opening day of the Conservatory of Flowers is a mystery we may never solve.



Myth: Second Crated Conservatory went to Sacramento
Could it have also been in the park—in pieces?

But what happened to Lick's second crated conservatory? According to researcher David Bare, the spare was sold to Charles Crocker, who erected the structure on the Crocker estate in Sacramento. This is most likely in reference to the Bell Conservatory, which was commissioned in 1878 by Margaret Crocker (wife of Edwin Crocker, brother to Charles) and built in 1881 on twenty-three acres of land she donated just outside the gates of the city's cemetery. Crocker hoped to bolster Sacramento's horticulture through experimentation with exotic plants in the new conservatory, but she also wanted it to provide free flowers for Sacramento's poor to adorn the graves of their loved ones.

Golden Gate Park historian and author Ray Clary noted that Bert Geisreiter, last owner of the Bell Conservatory, wrote to the Park Commission seeking information on their "replica" of the Conservatory of Flowers. The Geisreiters used the old Bell Conservatory as a commercial nursery, and Clary believed photographs from their collection showed similarities in shape, ironwork, and the entrance design. In fact, he believed the two conservatories to be identical in all but size, the Bell Conservatory being much smaller.

Sacramento razed the conservatory in 1955, which is consistent with Bare's article, however, the Sacramento City Cemetery National Register of Historic Places information form states that the Bell Conservatory was ordered through Tiffany of New York and shipped from Belgium, which is why the dome was famed for its green-tinted Belgian glass.

Another theory on the missing conservatory from the James Lick estate, proposed by researcher Clarence L. Shaw, Jr., was that materials for the second conservatory were used to build smaller greenhouses in the park. At one time there were four sunken-type, curved English greenhouses throughout Golden Gate Park that were replaced between 1948 and 1955. We reviewed 1938 aerial photographs to see if the footprint of these greenhouses could be spotted from above, without any luck, and Ray Clary contended only one of the donated conservatories was ever built in San Francisco. This is a mystery that requires more legwork to solve; which Western Neighborhoods Project reader is ready to accept that challenge?

Sources

1) Raymond H. Clary, *The Making of Golden Gate Park, The Early Years: 1865-1906,"* pg. 35.

2) "Architect's 2-Time Buyer," *San Francisco Chronicle,* January 24, 1926.

3) Email correspondence, "Conservatory of flowers---architect," between Laurence J. Hyman, John King, Edgar Lopez, and Scot Medbury, September 16–October 1, 2003.

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Anthony Misch and Remington Stone "James Lick, The 'Generous Miser,'" (Lick Observatory Historical Collection website, 1998). Accessed at http://collections.ucolick.org/archives_on_line/James_Lick.html.

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O. I. Schmaelzle

Washington's Towering Silver Leader

by Tammy Aramian

Since opening to San Francisco's students in August 1936, twelve principals have helmed George Washington High School (GWHS) in the Richmond District. One literally stands head and shoulders over the others: second principal Otto I. Schmaelzle (pronounced "Schmaltz-Lee"). Known to many as "O. I.," Schmaelzle's oft-spoken slogan was "When we work, we work hard; when we play, we play hard!" His remarkable seventeen-year command saw the ascendancy of GWHS as a nationally-ranked high school.

Born in 1896 in Illinois, the youngest of seven boys to Charles and Pauline Schmaelzle, he earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Illinois. Eldest brother Karl suggested he move to California and while earning his master's degree, O. I. met and married fellow Stanford student Dorothy Fair. Their son John was born in September 1936, and daughter Suzanne in March 1939 (both graduates of Lincoln High School). Upon completing his master's, Schmaelzle taught at Fresno High School and rose to vice principal. After three years he came to San Francisco. At Balboa High School from 1929 to 1941, he taught, chaired the Social Studies department, and served as vice principal. From Balboa he was promoted to head the entire school district's counseling department.

When Ernest Cummings, Washington High School's first principal, accepted a promotion to become San Francisco Unified School District Deputy Superintendent for Secondary Education, Schmaelzle applied for the position. In a 1986 oral history he explained that his motivation was simple: "I missed working with students."

Schmaelzle assumed command at Washington on March 1, 1945. By his second year he had put his stamp on GWHS with a huge influx of new faculty, many of whom would go on to teach at the school for twenty years or more. He vetted teachers thoroughly. "It had an outstanding faculty, equivalent to any college faculty. The faculty was the most important and outstanding thing that made Washington great. They didn't think in terms of dollars and cents. They thought of education. I had the advantage of being able to go out and hand-pick my teachers. Mrs. Ainsworth, English Department chair, and I went over to the East Bay to interview Miss Garin. We were both very impressed with her. That is how we got most of our teachers, by interviewing them."

Schmaelzle also didn't hesitate to transfer or fire teachers with whom he disagreed or that he felt weren't up to his standards.

Roland Bianchi, GWHS class of Spring 1948, one of seven former student body presidents who recently shared memories of their former principal, said "Schmaelzle had a keen sense of character and was so dedicated to making Washington the greatest school that he would bend rules to make it happen. He was a very meticulous guy, very strict. Most of the teachers were divorced or widowed, and very scholastically dedicated. If a teacher wasn't up to his standards, he or she disappeared. Football coach Milt Axt called his own shots and Schmaelzle didn't like that, so he moved Axt to Poly [Polytechnic High School] and got George Poppin to be Washington's coach. Every teacher was very proud of what they did, and that was why Washington eventually beat Lowell in the academic standings. If your scholastic standings were high, you almost automatically went to Lowell. Their standing was high at both Cal and Stanford, and Schmaelzle was going to, by hook or by crook, meet that mark if it was going to kill him!"



Otto I. Schmaelzle, George Washington High School principal from 1945 to 1962. (*Surveyor* yearbook, 1947.)

Dick Lewis (Class of Spring 1947): "I felt Schmaelzle was really interested in making sure we had a top-rated school. He was a real leader, and he wanted to make that school great. He was out and around walking in the halls during breaks and at lunch; he was a big man, and he was a presence."

Gilbert Morgan, Class of Fall 1944, was student body president in the last full semester at Washington before Schmaelzle's tenure: "[Principal] Cummings had oversight for student activities—you had to clear everything through him. He was a very nice man. I met with him at least once a week, and I think he appreciated it. Otherwise, it was almost as though he wasn't there. […] He was always open if you wanted to see him, but he didn't show himself around too much. He wasn't an outgoing type. The kids who came after me told me Schmaelzle was always walking around the school, everybody knew him."

Principal Schmaelzle was consumed with Washington High School's academic standing and particularly the performance of GWHS grads who were accepted into University of California, Berkeley. His son, John Schmaelzle, recalled that "Father did not support

the concept of an elitist academic school, as he believed one's education benefited from a cross section of students from many backgrounds and academic achievements. He believed one was not disadvantaged academically by attending a nonsegregated school. The academic honors from UC Berkeley bore out this belief, hence were quite important to him."

During Schmaelzle's tenure, GWHS often received the UC Award of Merit, given to the high school whose freshmen achieved the highest cumulative GPA at the university. He remembered "those who went to Washington went there for a real purpose; to get a good education. Twelve years we had honors at the University of California […] We had the highest scholastic record of all San Francisco high schools."

Gus Petropoulos, Class of Fall 1956, started out in student government as the custodian, whose "primary function was to keep all the trophies shiny. Mr. Schmaelzle was very big on keeping the trophies shiny, so our trophy case had lots of shiny trophies." Petropoulos served as student body president in his last semester and worked closely with Principal Schmaelzle. "He insisted with the School Board that GWHS be an all-city school, where student attendance wasn't limited to those who lived in the Richmond. Washington was attractive to students from all over the city. It drew many from the Marina, the Fillmore, the Sunset. As a result, it was a diverse student body. Students at first separated themselves [racially] at various events, but eventually we would get together."

Schmaelzle's success in making Washington a school that could draw from beyond the district resulted in a surprisingly diverse student body for the time. "We could hand-pick our students. Washington was open to the whole city," Schmaelzle remembered. "Of course, most students were from the Richmond. We also got quite a few students from Chinatown."

Roland Bianchi didn't live in the Richmond, but was determined to attend GWHS. After being told by the Washington school secretary he had to go to Galileo High School, the closest school to his home, Bianchi asked to see the principal. "Schmaelzle came out of his office, all 6-foot-3 of his formidable presence, and said, 'What can I do for you?' I said 'I'd like to enroll in Washington.' He said 'Why?' I said 'I was Student Body President at Marina, I'm a decent student, I don't get all A's, but I get good grades. I won't give you any trouble, I'll be on time, and I'd really like to enroll here.' So Schmaelzle said to the secretary 'Give this guy an application!' and told me, 'If I ever see you on the tardy list, if you ever give me trouble, you're outta here!'"

Otto Schmaelzle could be intimidating, and was well known as a no-nonsense disciplinarian. Petropoulos remembered him as "a bigger than life character, [an] authoritarian with a big, booming voice, but with a soft stick. While you knew he was in charge, he was fond of students, he wanted students to succeed. He knew what he wanted to happen at the school. He knew how to direct it, and how to work with students to get the best out of them.

"In early fall the student officers got together in his office to plan the semester's events. I was sitting next to him with a big paper calendar. There were no events planned for Christmas Break, so I wrote on the calendar 'Xmas Break.' When he saw that, he stopped the proceedings, looked at me and said, 'Don't you ever use an 'X' to mark the Lord!' It resounded in my ears and scared the hell out of me!"

Bianchi: "If auditorium rallies got out of hand, he would come up on stage and dismiss the rally. 'Everybody back to your homeroom!' My campaign slogan was 'Let's get rollin' with Roland,' so my first rally, I came out on roller skates. For the second, I rode my bicycle down the center aisle, up a six-inch-wide plank onto the stage and put on the brakes, and the crowd goes so crazy, Schmaelzle comes up and dismisses us, 'Everybody back to homeroom!'

"Then, I go to a Crosley automobile dealership and asked the manager, 'Could you lend me a Crosley for a couple of hours?' He says 'What do you want it for?' I told him my plan, and he says 'Yeah, can I come and see it?' So I bring the Crosley on stage, the football team came up through the trap door under the stage and out the Crosley, like a circus clown car, and the last guy out was coach George Poppin. Audience goes nuts! Rally canceled! Back to homeroom!

"But when I graduated, I reminded Schmaelzle of my promise. I said, 'I never gave you any trouble, did I?' He said, 'No, you didn't, you made me very proud.' That was my happy career at Washington, all attributable to a principal who recognized talent, promoted it, and made you be yourself."

One anecdote from several 1950s class members recounts a Hi-Y club's prank. Once the perpetrators were fingered, O. I. transferred each senior to different schools



George Washington High student body officers for Fall 1956. Top row, left to right: Roy Hornsby, Len Slater, Morris Bobrow, Jerry Anderson. Bottom row, left to right: Sandy Potter, Gus Petropoulos, Jackie Pera, Keith Myamoto. (*Surveyor* yearbook, 1957.)

so they wouldn't graduate together. But beyond a few exceptions, Schmaelzle believed it was the students themselves that set the high standards:

"[T]he Eagles [Society] and the G.S.S. [Girls Service Society] would look after the conduct at the rallies," he explained in his oral history, "They were basically in charge of the whole thing. One time the school got very dirty and [the Eagles and G.S.S.] got together and decided not to have any more rallies until the campus was cleaned. It wasn't very long before the campus was cleaned. […] I felt the student body itself helped make Washington the great school that it was."

While serving as student body president, **Daniel Rolfs,** Class of Spring 1960, expanded the service societies' role beyond monitoring study halls to include the lunchroom. "[It was] an amazing innovation by Mr. Schmaelzle…It worked fine, and the teachers were delighted." Rolfs also shared a surprising event that may have revealed O. I. mellowed with age:

"At the opening pep rally for Fall '59, I rode my motor scooter on to the stage. Mr. Schmaelzle knew that I had a motor scooter, and it was his idea I do this, along with something even more unusual—he would be on the back as I rode it on stage! He was a big man, and I had to really concentrate to control the scooter, even for the short distance we rode. Then we got off the scooter and addressed the audience. This was a big hit. At the time I thought it was 'kinda cool' (teenagers are never too impressed with anything), but now, I think that was an imaginative and creative thing for him to do. He was very pleasant to work with and I had a lot of respect for him—and maybe some degree of awe."

Phil Gaal, Class of Spring 1953, began in student government as athletic manager. "Each homeroom, we'd have a radio broadcast, and the athletic manager would give the results of the previous week's competitions with other schools. I'd have to write everything I was going to say and present it to Schmaelzle before going on the air; he'd review it first. As student body president, I would meet with Schmaelzle from time to time and go over different activities. We had a 'Spick and Span Week' to clean up campus, and we'd get the word out. He kept track of the GPAs of Washington students who went to Berkeley and would compare to Lowell, so there was a big competition between Lowell and Washington. Many times we came out on top. He was a leader in every sense of the word. He lived up to his slogan in every sense. Schmaelzle was a good leader and wonderful principal."



Roland Bianchi wielding a giant gavel at a dinner honoring Otto I. Schmaelzle in 1962. Opposite: March 1958 issue of *Reader's Digest* with laudatory article on the school.

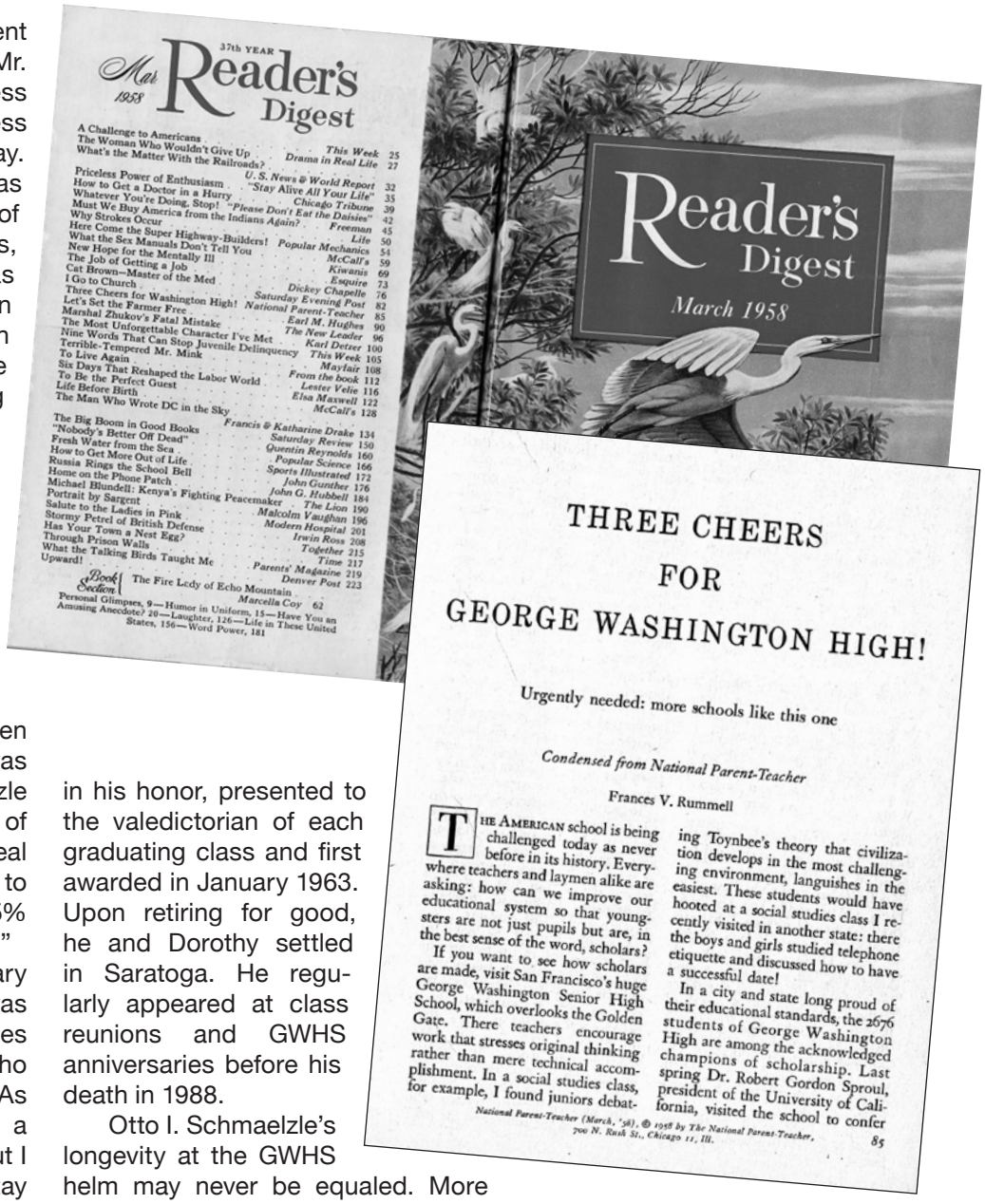
Petropoulos noted "He was very much in charge of associated events outside the school. For instance, there was a Grand Pageant at the beginning of football season at Kezar Stadium. In addition to the competition on the field amongst the players, there was a competition amongst the rooting sections. The rooting section that won would get to sit in the center of the stands, underneath the press box. When I became active in student government, that's where Washington was, and we had to be sure it stayed there!

"He worked with the elected head yell leader, the pom pom girls, and the various student government officers on events that would prepare us for that pageant. When I was president, I had the opportunity to stand in front of the group while it did its thing on the field. The cards were one color, then they were flipped over to become a pattern, such as a red 'W' on gray, and everybody had a white shirt. The cheerleaders would come out, and there was a cheer of some kind, and when it came time to end the cheer usually people applaud and laugh, but we developed a style where we would go from a loud roar to sudden silence—you could hear a pin drop!—it was really quite striking. […] When we did this at Kezar Stadium, everybody was shocked. You're not used to hearing a bunch of kids yelling and screaming and then come to a dead stop, sudden quiet. I'm not saying that was Schmaelzle's idea, but it's the kind of thing he supported. Innovations that kept us ahead of other high schools.

"When I talk to my friends from those days, they all think of him well. He was well regarded throughout the city for the kind of school that he had generated, for the kind of faculty he brought together at that school. I feel he did us all a great service, and we benefited from his involvement in our lives; it was very positive."

Marvin Steinberg, Class of Spring 1949, and later principal of Saratoga's Redwood Junior High, concluded his student body presidency with a report written in June 1949. "In one section I wrote, 'As I sat at the track meet with Mr. Schmaelzle and my buddies, I realized why he is such a popular principal. For

Mr. Schmaelzle was the most vehement of our group.' I concluded with, 'To Mr. Schmaelzle I would also like to express my sincere gratitude for his willingness to cooperate in every possible way. Washington is a great school. It has been made great by the feeling of good will between the administrators, faculty, and students which has been fostered by Mr. Schmaelzle in his years at Washington. I only wish that every student could enjoy the privilege of working with and knowing Mr. Schmaelzle.'"



The apex of Schmaelzle's reign at GWHS was the March 1958 *Reader's Digest* article, "Three Cheers for George Washington High!" Author Frances Rummell asked UC Berkeley's Chemistry Chair for outstanding high school recommendations.

"I would say she visited about ten times before writing her article. It was very favorable indeed," Schmaelzle remembered. "That caused a lot of national recognition […] a great appeal and desire for students to come to Washington. At that time almost 85% went on to college from Washington."

The prior year, a Secondary Education Association conference was held in San Francisco, with attendees from across the United States who visited Washington High School. As a result, Schmaelzle was offered a position at a Detroit high school, "but I didn't want to go there. I wanted to stay in San Francisco."

Even his 1962 retirement garnered many articles in local papers. O. I. went on to became West Coast Admissions Officer at Washington University for four years. "They wanted me to visit high schools that were academic and had high scholastic standing. I did this throughout all the western states. I found in comparing Washington to those, how very important ours was. Almost every one was different and I found it very educational. But one thing was certain in my mind: I wouldn't want to change our system to that of any other school I had seen. I was very proud of our results at Washington."

Washington High School established the Principal Schmaelzle Cup in his honor, presented to the valedictorian of each graduating class and first awarded in January 1963. Upon retiring for good, he and Dorothy settled in Saratoga. He regularly appeared at class reunions and GWHS anniversaries before his death in 1988.

Otto I. Schmaelzle's longevity at the GWHS helm may never be equaled. More importantly, he set a lofty standard for Washington, and would be proud of the academic achievements and college acceptance rates of over 90% of today's students. This is his legacy to Washington High School, and to public education in San Francisco.

Tammy Aramian, Class of Spring 1974, has volunteered with the GWHS Alumni Association since 1990 and has served as its Executive Director since 2014. She's actually supposed to be a graphic artist and photographer.

Sources:

Surveyor yearbooks: 1945, 1947, 1948, 1949, 1953, 1957, 1960.

GW 50th Anniversary Oral History compilation, Otto I. Schmaelzle interview by Dana Stone, 1986, GWHS student publication.

Reunion video footage, Roland Bianchi, April 2013.

Video interviews with Roland Bianchi, Phil Gaal, Dick Lewis, Gilbert Morgan, and Gus Petropoulos, Oct–Nov. 2018.

Email correspondence with Daniel Rolfs (October 2018), John Schmaelzle (December 2018), and Marvin Steinberg (November. 2018).

Excerpts from the Day Books of Miss Ida M. Boger from 1896–1903

Edited by Gordon W. Gribble

WNP member Gordon Gribble was very kind to send us the transcription of diaries, "day books," his grandmother's sister, Ida M. Boger, kept at the turn of the twentieth century. The diaries capture small and delightful details of life, her budding romance with the man who would be her husband, and some real tragedies, including the deaths of her brother Arthur (6 years old) and mother (44 years old). The Bogers lived on the corner of Fillmore and Hayes Streets in the Western Addition. To Ida, Hayes Valley was "The Valley," Market Street was "in Town," and Alamo Square was "The Hill." Ida's days often took her farther west. After Mr. Gribble's introduction we excerpt some west side mentions.



Ida M. Boger, second from left, with her sisters and father, 1900s. (Courtesy of Gordon W. Gribble)

Aunt Ida was born on August 23, 1878, in San Francisco to German parents, Frederich (F. E.) and Magdelena (Lena) Boger. Ida was the oldest of three girls (Ida, Alma, and Alice) and three boys (Adolph, Edward, and Arthur). Sadly, all three boys died young, and Alma, my grandmother, died a few months after the birth of my father, Waldron. When Ida started her Day Books [in 1896], two of her three brothers, Adolph and Edward, had died. Aunt Alice gave up a married life to raise my dad. I knew and loved both Aunts Ida and Alice through my childhood and teen years. Auntie Alice, a wonderful woman, was like a grandmother to me and to my brothers.

I want to thank Wendy Berryman for transcribing these nine "Day Books," which are more than 100 years old! Although Ida had a reasonably legible handwriting, it was often difficult for us to identify certain capital letters. Ida's spelling and grammar—though generally excellent—was occasionally careless, especially punctuation. She often used the present tense when describing past trips and activities. I have usually left these unchanged so as not to change Ida's writing, but I have taken the liberty of augmenting her text and adding photos of the events and places that she describes, many of which are only memories today.

Ida begins her Day Books at age 17½ and, unfortunately for us, concludes her writing at age 24, going on 25, and a month before her marriage to Edward Nienstadt, Sr.

Feb. 16, 1896: I promised Sophie that I would go to Golden Gate Park and we went and sat on the bridge. While there a short time we met Hattie Dunker. After we three listened to the music Hattie left us and we two walked around a little and then started for home. [*Sophie Joost, a friend who plays a prominent role in the day books, accompanied Ida to many Sunday park concerts and "the bridge" is likely the iron pedestrian bridge that used to span over Middle Drive next to the second band stand.*]

April 15, 1896: I did not sleep well last night so I did not feel very well. Auntie Emma died last evening at 11:20 o'clock after her long illness. [*Emma was Ida's father's sister-in-law, and just 36 years old at the time of her death.*]

April 18, 1896: The funeral of Aunt Emma took place this afternoon at Odd Fellows Cemetery. There were 10 carriages and five or six buggies. The flower pieces were many so they hired an extra wagon to carry them.

May 17, 1896: Sophie and I went to the Park to-day. We listened to the music on our usual place, the bridge, and then to the Conservatory and then we walked home.

May 31, 1896: Sophie and I spent the afternoon at Sutro's Baths. There we met a number of friends. On our return we took the Sutro Cars [*streetcar*] back and on that



Pedestrian bridge over Middle Drive in Golden Gate Park, 1890s. The music concourse, today tennis courts, was on the right on its far side. (WNP collection, wnp15.601.)

car was "the Mayor" who took off his hat to me. [*She is likely referring to Adolph Sutro, creator of the Baths and mayor of San Francisco 1894-1896.*]

November 26, 1896: To-day being Thanksgiving Day I did not have to go to work but greatly enjoyed a turkey dinner at twelve o'clock with all the rest including Uncle [Edward Boger?]. In the afternoon Sophie and I took a car ride. I first went for her, then we walked down to Larkin and Hayes Streets, took the Larkin St. Cars, transferred to the Sutter and thence to the Sutro Line. After reaching at the Ocean we went to the Cliff House and to the [Sutro] Heights. In coming in home we took the steam cars, transferred to the Jackson and rode to Powell and Washington, transferred to Washington-Powell and at last came home with the Hayes St. Cars at about 5:15 o'clock. We rather enjoyed that ride although it was awfully cold out. [*Despite taking seven different forms of transportation, because of transfers, the streetcar trip cost a nickel out and a nickel back.*]

January 24, 1897: We were done real early with washing to-day so in the afternoon Mamma, Artie and I took a ride out to the Park and took in the Park Museum which has been closed for a time and has been just opened lately again. [*The Memorial Museum, left over from the California Midwinter International Exposition of 1894, stood just east of where the de Young Museum is in Golden Gate Park today.*]

February 12, 1897: Papa and I went out to Richmond for a ride to see our lot out there [I believe that this lot in the Richmond District is where Ida lived after her marriage to Edward Nienstadt, Sr., and where they built a house. Ida's wedding present from Papa? This house still exists at 761 11th Avenue and is where I found Ida's Day Books in the basement.]

June 23, 1897: To-day we girls consisting of Clara, Alma, Bertha, May Kiordan, Martha Dellwig, Amelia Andrews, Sophie and I all went out to the Beach to spend a day. We all supplied lunch and had more than we could eat. We went out the Jackson St. way and returned with Haight St. way. After we had eaten our lunch or dinner we all went in wading which was just grand. While in the water Clara took a photograph of us all. She took 3 other pictures and one of the Cliff House. Late in the afternoon Hattie and Katie came out, just too late for the pictures. We were the last ones on the beach and left there at 5:30 train after having a grand time.

October 3, 1897: Sophie and I went out just to the Pan Handle of the Park to watch the different teams that passed that way [carriages and buggies].

October 6, 1897: While the rest were in the Mission to Krügger Mamma and I first went to the Odd Fellows Cemetery and then the Laurel Hill [*Cemetery*] to which I had never been before. From here we were so near that we called on the Dunkers to see how they enjoyed themselves last evening [*at a dance at Union Square Hall*].

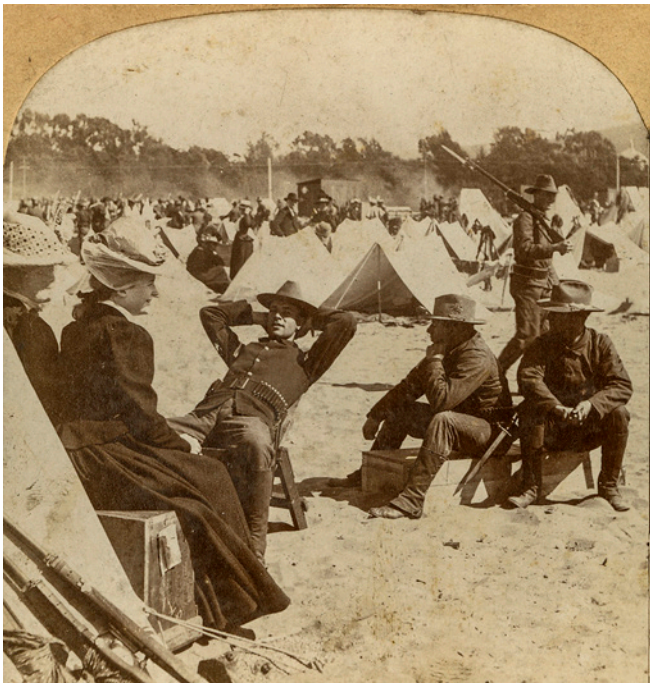
October 24, 1897: Tine and the baby were here to spend the afternoon while Sophie and I went to the IOOF [Independent Order of Odd Fellows] Cemetery and also to see her cousin at the French Hospital who had an operation performed upon her ear. In the evening Mamma and I went to see "Friends" at the Grand [*Theatre*]. We both thought the piece played good and we liked it. [*The French Hospital stood where the French campus of Kaiser Permanente is now between 5th and 6th Avenue on Geary Boulevard.*]

October 28, 1897: This afternoon mamma and I took a walk and indeed a long walk. We first took the Hayes St. cars to Stanyan St. and from there we walked through the Park to Cliff House and then to the Seal Rock House which took us exactly 1 hr. and 40 minutes [about 3 miles]. There we had coffee and cake and a talk to Mrs. Doescher and then we started off on our homeward walk which took us just as long as going out. We did not feel tired at all.

May 29, 1898: Alice, Arthur [Artie], Mamma and I walked out to the Cemetery and then we took a walk out to Richmond district to where the soldiers of different states are stationed. We walked up one street and down another, and watched the different styles of camping. [*Camp Merritt, on the old Bay District racetrack between Arguello and 5th Avenue south of Geary, where volunteer soldiers awaited transportation out to the Philippines as part of the Spanish-American War.*]

May 30, 1898: In the afternoon Mae Reardon, Sophie and I went out to see the soldiers out at the Bay District. We met a good many that we knew and Hattie who we met went around with us. Our intentions were to go and see all the companies stationed there but we only visited one and that was the Minnesota where we spent an enjoyable afternoon. We were there about 2 and did not return until after 6 o'clock.

June 13, 1898: Having been ordered to school on Alma's account Mamma and I went and after we got



Women visiting soldiers at Camp Merritt, 1898. (Whiting View Company stereoview; WNP Collection, wnp24.0114a.)

through there we took a ride out to Richmond district to see the soldiers and from there we took a walk through the Park and watched them drill which was amusing.

September 23, 1898: This being such a lovely day we took a ride out to the Beach in the Fillmore St. Car [this was a line that would later be designated the 7-line streetcar on Lincoln Way]. We stayed out at the Beach for almost an hour and then went up to Sutro Baths where we enjoyed ourselves watching the bathers.

June 30, 1899: The girls of the Club [*a sewing club that Ida was a member of for many years*] gave a private picnic out at Lake Merced to which only 5 of the Club girls went and Alma, Katie and Bertha and Ida Ehrenpfort went as our chaperones. It is a beautiful ride and also a lovely place and also had a grand time. We had 3 pictures taken, one a real funny one, the girls having their hair hanging, the other a beautiful one in which I am the goddess, a more of a carnival picture than a picnic picture, the other a real sober one having Lake Merced as a back one. We were home at about 5 o'clock well pleased with our trip.

July 17, 1899: This afternoon I went down to Clara Ehrenpfort's to pay for the pictures which were taken out at Lake Merced in June. These pictures are just lovely, a nicer picture of a picnic I have not seen for a long time. [*No instant gratification with photography back then!*]

July 31, 1899: Alma and I went out to the Cemetery this afternoon and when we came home Martha D[egener] was here with the Buggy and Horse (Lena) and took me for a ride out to the Cliff which I rather enjoyed after we were some way although at first I was somewhat afraid. [Her first buggy ride!]

February 24, 1900: Alice and I being such a grand day we two took a ride out to the Cliff House and took a stroll through Sutro Heights and then we had our Kodak we took three pictures one of the Cliff House, Seal Rocks, and one of the entrance of Sutro Baths. We enjoyed a couple of hours of fresh air and then came home well satisfied.

March 30, 1900: This afternoon for a ride Mamma and I took a trip out to the "Chain of Lakes" [Golden Gate Park] and were really surprised to see such a grand place. Having the Kodak we took 3 pictures of this place. We walked from there clear to the Hayes St. entrance and we did not feel very tired when we got home.

April 22, 1900: It was our intention of going out to Dunkers this afternoon but just before we were ready Mr. Witte came here with his buggy and took me riding leaving here about 2 or so. We first went out to the Band Stand and listened to the music and then we rode out to Ingleside and out the Old Almshouse Road to the new Boulevard and Trü terda and out to the Cliff and back home arriving here at 5:45 or so. It was a lovely day for riding.



Women posing on rustic bridge at Chain of Lakes in Golden Gate Park, circa 1900. (WNP Collection, wnp27.2851.)

August 26, 1900: [*Ida has a long day and takes another one of her streetcar tours of the city here.*] Having rose early for a Sunday morning as Alice went up to Sonoma Co. to see Bertha who is at Vineyard this morning. Alma and I rode out as far as the new bandstand and then walked out to the Cliff [*House*]. We left home at about 7:40 and returned from our pleasant walk at 10:20. In the evening Messrs. T. Gray and A. Grubb came up here and then we four went for a ride first going to San Bruno road by way of the Fillmore and then the Folsom St. cars. We then rode as far as Folsom and 4th where we transferred to the Ellis and rode out to the Cliff arriving home nearing eleven o'clock after a nice ride and it being such a grand night and in good company made it very nice indeed.

September 9, 1900: This afternoon Tom Gray called up here for us and took us two out to see the dedication of the new music stand given by Mr. Claus Spreckels to the Golden Gate Park. [*The Temple of Music which now stands in Golden Gate Park's Music Concourse.*] It is a beautiful structure costing several thousand dollars situated out at the old Midwinter Fair grounds nearly opposite the Japanese village [*now the Tea Garden*]. The crowd at the Park was immense, every place of grass, benches were all taken. Towards later in the afternoon it became very mean [*foggy*] so we three started for home arriving here about five.

October 7, 1900: Julius, Carl and Eda Peters were all here in the afternoon and in the evening Sophie and her intended were here and I having expected Ed [*her future husband*] he also came. After Sophie and Henry left then we two at about nine took a ride out to the Beach. It was a beautiful night and we took a walk up to the Cliff where we had an interesting talk but on our homeward trip it was just as nice but our talk became more interesting; it was 11:45 before I came home so quickly did the time fly. This is both a night and date and ride worth while remembering for certain reasons.

October 14, 1900: Having made a date for this afternoon Edward called for me and then we took a ride out to Land's End. This is a pretty little place

and to-day was well filled with visitors. We sat there for a few hours eating peanuts and chewing gum and talking of the happening of the day.

November 16, 1900: The carriage called for us at about 9:30 and then we four went to the I.O.O.F Chapel to witness the cremation of Mama and the three boys [Edward, Adolph, and Arthur, all being re-interred for a shared niche in the Columbarium with Ida's mother, Lena, who had died four days earlier at just 44 years of age]. This took place at 10:15 or so and about 20 of our friends were there.

January 31, 1901: This afternoon with Papa, Alice and Alma we went out to the Cemetery and had the ashes of poor Mama and the three boys deposited in a niche out at the Columbarium on the 2nd floor. After fixing everything there we four started for 12th Ave, and Pt. Lobos and from there promenaded to the Park taking a few pictures while out there. I had expected my gentleman friend this evening but Bertha and Anita came in his place as he did not come.

March 14, 1901: So as to keep up the fashion Alma and I took a ride out to the Beach and amused ourselves by sitting in the sand and watching the life saving crew returning from a little water trip.

May 30, 1901: This being Decoration Day we did not get out to the Cemetery until the afternoon and then we met many that we knew. Our full intentions were that Ed and I were going to the Chutes but we both changed our minds so went walking instead and finally landed out at the Cliff for a ride. There we stayed for about an hour talking of the past, present and future. It was after 11 when we reached Hayes and Fillmore St.



View west at Odd Fellows Cemetery with Columbarium at right, 1900s. (WNP collection, wnp15.208.) Below, the wreck of the *Reporter* at Ocean Beach in 1902. (Marilyn Blaisdell Collection, courtesy of Molly Blaisdell, wnp70.0419.)

January 6, 1902: After lunch Alma and I walked from here to the Cemetery and then from there to Pt. Lobos Ave. and 11th Ave. After viewing our lot [where Ida and Ed would build their future home] we then went to the Park seeing where the new Chutes are to be located. We walked home through the Park and then to the 11th St. entrance where we took the car home.

May 11, 1902: At 1:10 Ed came and had to wait until 1:40 and then we took the Blue Fillmore St. cars and rode to the Bovolade (?) or Carville and we took just a short walk over to the wreck [*Likely the* Reporter, *which wrecked on Ocean Beach on March 13*] and then came in by the way of Ingleside passing by Lake Merced and different little way stations and we arrived here at 5:45.

Ida Boger and Edward R. Nienstadt were married on June 17, 1903 in the Boger family home at 622 Fillmore Street. Her son, Edward Nienstadt, Jr., was born almost exactly a year later on June 16, 1904. The family lived in Hayes Valley, but eventually, beginning in October 1912, a building of two flats was constructed on the 11th Avenue lot in the Richmond District, and the family moved west. Ida (Boger) Nienstadt died on January 20, 1967 at 88 years of age.



Historical Happenings

outsidelands.org/events.php

Play Ball! Baseball in the City

April 4, 2019 (Thursday) 7:00 PM–8:00 PM
1617 Balboa Street (between 17th and 18th Avenues)
$20 General Public, $10 for WNP members

On the eve of the San Francisco Giants' opener, we will highlight rare and historical baseball images from OpenSFHistory. See the minor league San Francisco Seals playing at 16th Street and Potrero, Candlestick Park under construction, and Willie Mays, Juan Marichal, and other Giant favorites in their prime. Bring your memories and prepare for a whirlwind illustrated tour of America's pastime as played in the city.

Western Neighborhoods Project 20 Years Gala

May 19, 2019 (Sunday) 6:00 PM–10:00 PM
The Clubhouse at the Presidio Golf Course

We will celebrate Western Neighborhoods Project's 20th anniversary with a special gala of fine food, toasts, a silent auction, celebrity historians (yes, they exist), and a great deal of gaiety and appreciation. For more details and tickets, visit: OutsideLands.org/gala

Sutro Baths/Sutro Heights Walk

June 8, 2019 (Saturday) 10:00 AM–12:00 PM
Meet at Lands End Lookout, 680 Point Lobos Avenue
Free! RSVP at OutsideLands.org/events or 415-661-1000.

John Martini will lead a tour of the Sutro Baths site and Adolph Sutro's former estate. Built in the 1890s, Sutro Baths was the largest indoor bathhouse in the world, featuring seven swimming pools, art works, promenades and museum exhibits, all covered by nearly three acres of glass. Today, only broken concrete ruins remain at Lands End. Even in ruins, the Sutro Baths still draws thousands of people daily who explore its mysterious foundations.

Villages and Concessions of the Midwinter Fair

June 20, 2019 (Thursday) 7:00 PM–8:00 PM
1617 Balboa Street (between 17th and 18th Avenues)
$20 General Public, $10 for WNP members

From plaster igloos to German castles to an indoor volcano, the concession exhibits at the 1894 California Midwinter International Exposition offered a range of unusual entertainment to visitors. "Villages" of African, Hawaiian, and Inuit performers reinforced imperial ambitions and attitudes of superiority while meeting "interest in foreign humanity." California interpreted and mythologized its own past with the 49 Mining Camp, while people paid dimes and quarters across the fair grounds to ride camels, descend down a dragon's maw, and eat fortune cookies in what became the Japanese Tea Garden.

Special guests: Japanese Tea Garden gardener and historian Steven Pitsenbarger and Presidio Trust historian Barbara Berglund Sokolov, author of *Making San Francisco American: Cultural Frontiers in the Urban West, 1846-1906.*

We add events frequently and sometimes things fall together quickly, so not every listing finds its way into the Outside Lands magazine schedule. For the most accurate and complete events calendar, visit outsidelands.org/events.php.

More good ideas for staying up to date: follow our social media channels (listed on inside front cover) and be sure you are on our email news list by entering your address in the box at the bottom of the front page of outsidelands.org



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the southern "College City" section, named after the new San Francisco State campus nearby.

In addition to the underground wiring and having most garages tucked in access alleys, Lakeside was known for its Colonial Revival architecture and white picket fences. The Stonesons didn't stop building with Lakeside. They embarked in the early 1950s on their signature achievement: the Stonestown Shopping Center and Apartments on the west side of 19th Avenue.

Other correct guessers included Joan Cinquini, Daniel Hollander, Kathy Mallegni, Jacquie Proctor, and Jeanne Shore.

How can you do with the photo below? Have any idea of the where and the when? I will tell you that all three of the buildings on the far side of the street are still standing in 2019

Email your guesses of where and when, along with any memories, to woody@outsidelands.org, or use the Western Neighborhoods Project contact information on the inside cover. Good luck!

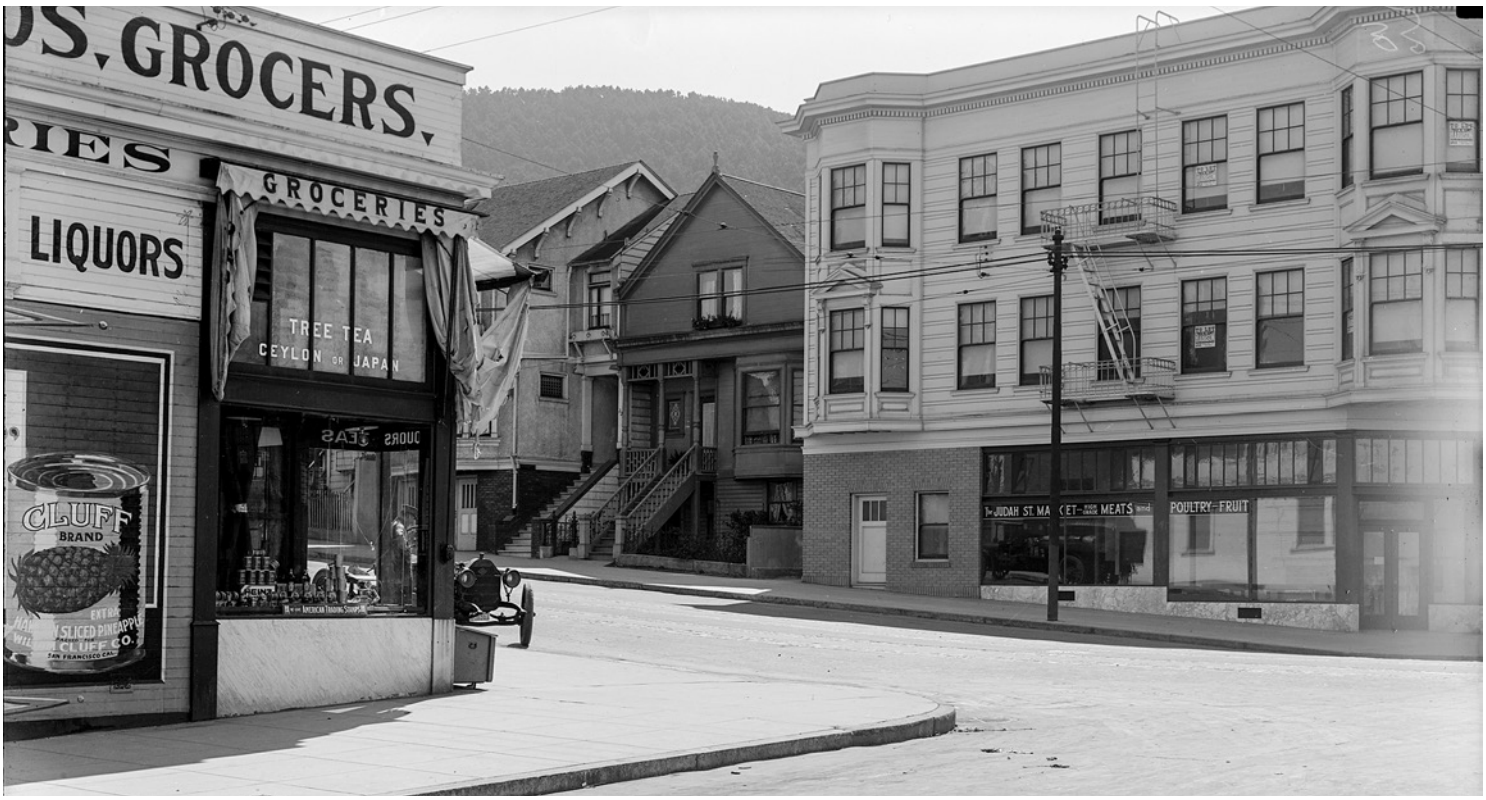


DISTINCTIVE HOME AWAITS OWNER

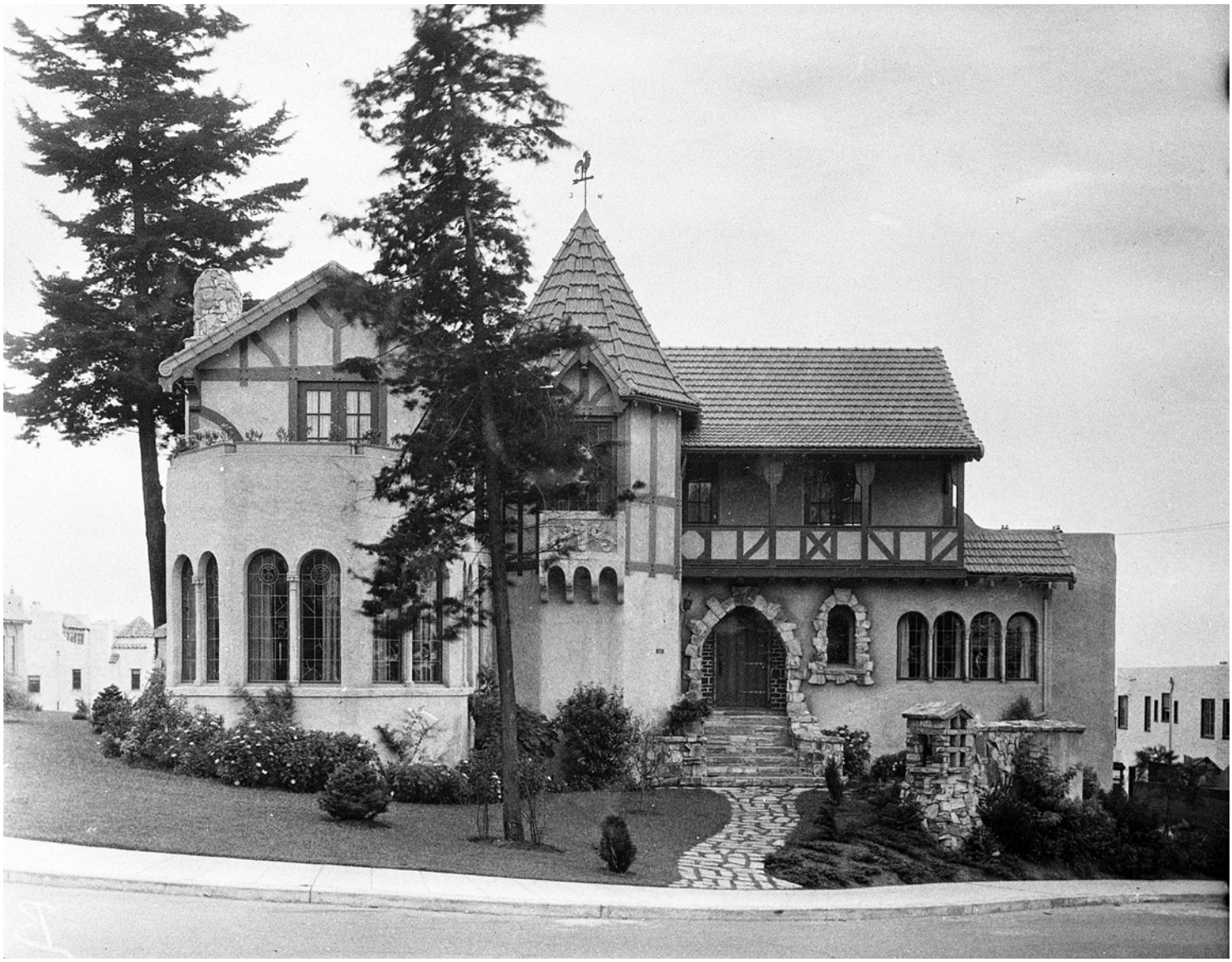
One of Two Cape Cod Homes in S. F.

Unusual one and a half story architecture employed in this residence makes it a home that is noticed twice. The effect is one of good taste, simplicity and individuality. Just completed in Lakeside district, it will be bought with payments like rent.

Above: Ad for 85 Beachmont Drive in *San Francisco Chronicle*, December 11, 1937.
Below: Mystery photo! Can you guess from the clues where this is today?



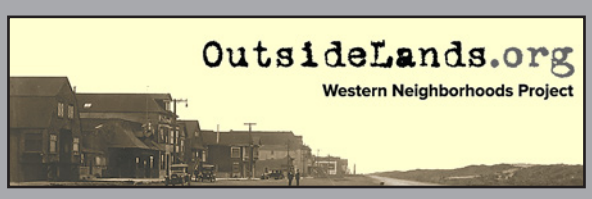
The Last Word



540 Darien Way at Aptos Avenue in Balboa Terrace in 1928. (WNP collection, wnp26.1909.)

The architect Harold G. Stoner possessed the ability to design buildings in divergent styles while still putting his signature on the structure. Before he served as the architect of the Colonial Revival Lakeside District houses on Beachmont Drive seen inside, he created fantastical houses across different West of Twin Peaks neighborhoods.

The Mock Tudor/Mediterranean mash-up seen above is straight out of a Mother Goose fairytale. The print we have in our collection was misidentified as in Monterey Heights, but we found it still standing at 540 Darien Way in Balboa Terrace, where it was featured as a *San Francisco Chronicle* model home in 1928, furnished by the Emporium and called a "$35,000 Norman type of manor house."



Not a WNP Member?

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